

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of assisting with control of a communications unit from a remote
5 agent, the method comprising:
receiving an instruction message that corresponds to voiced instructions;
converting the voiced instructions to control commands;
providing a control message corresponding to the control commands; and
sending the control message to the communications unit, thereby assisting
10 with the control of the communications unit.
2. The method of claim 1:
wherein the receiving the instruction message further includes receiving
specific information sufficient to identify the communications unit; and
15 wherein the converting the voiced instructions includes converting the voiced
instructions to the control commands that correspond to a type of communications
unit.
3. The method of claim 2 wherein the voiced instructions are converted to the
20 control commands that correspond to keypad activations at the communications unit.
4. The method of claim 2 further comprising maintaining a database associated
with the communications unit, the database including one of a parameter status and a
mirrored database associated with the communications unit.

5. The method of claim 4:

wherein the voiced instructions corresponds to an action comprising one of ;

dialing a number,

looking up a number in a phone book of the communications unit, the

5 phone book incorporated into the mirrored database associated with the
communications unit,

modifying contents of a memory of the communications unit, and

sending a text message;

wherein the control commands will effect the action when executed by the

10 communications unit.

6. The method of claim 1 further comprising sending a confirmation message as
confirmation of the receiving the instruction message.

15 7. The method of claim 1 wherein the receiving the instruction message occurs at
the remote agent and the method further comprises forwarding a first message
corresponding to the instruction message to an assistant agent, the assistant agent
performing the converting the voiced instructions to the control commands and
returning to the remote agent a second message corresponding to the control
20 commands.

8. The method of claim 7 further comprising selecting the assistant agent from a plurality of assistant agents prior to the forwarding the first message, the selecting based on availability of the assistant agent and a ranking of the assistant agent among the plurality of assistant agents.

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9. The method of claim 8 wherein the availability of the assistant agent is determined by a log on procedure and the ranking of the assistant agent depends on one of an extent of availability of, a timeliness of services provided by, an accuracy of the services provided by, and economic considerations related to the assistant agent.

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10. The method of claim 7 further comprising selecting more than one assistant agent from a plurality of assistant agents and forwarding the first message to the more than one assistant agent, each of the more than one assistant agent performing the converting the voiced instructions and the returning the respective second message to provide more than one respective second messages, the method further comprising comparing the more than one respective second messages to detect an error in the more than one respective second messages.

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20 11. The method of claim 10 wherein the selecting more than one assistant agent further comprises selecting a trusted assistant agent and an unknown assistant agent and comparing the respective second messages to evaluate the unknown assistant agent.

12. A server arranged and constructed to assist with control of a communications unit, the server comprising:

a receiver to receive an instruction message that corresponds to voiced instructions;

5 a controller, coupled to the receiver to convert the voiced instructions to control commands and to provide a control message corresponding to the control commands; and

a transmitter, coupled to the controller, to send the control message to the communications unit, thereby assisting with the control of the communications unit.

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13. The server of claim 12:

wherein the receiver further receives specific information sufficient to identify the communications unit; and

15 wherein the controller converts the voiced instructions to the control commands that correspond to a type of communications unit.

14. The server of claim 13 wherein the controller converts the voiced instructions to the control commands that correspond to keypad activations at the communications unit.

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15. The server of claim 13 further comprising a memory for storing a database associated with the communications unit, the database including one of unit specific information, a parameter status, and a mirrored database associated with the communications unit.

16. The server of claim 15:

wherein the controller converts the voiced instructions to the control commands that, when executed by the communications unit, will effect an action comprising one of;

5 dialing a number,

looking up a number in a phone book of the communications unit, the phone book incorporated into the mirrored database associated with the communications unit,

10 modifying contents of a memory of the communications unit, the modifying also performed on the mirrored database associated with the communications unit, and

sending a text message.

17. The server of claim 12 wherein the controller controls the transmitter to
15 further send a confirmation message as confirmation that the receiver received the instruction message.

18. The server of claim 12 wherein the controller further controls the transmitter
to forward a first message corresponding to the instruction message to an assistant
20 server, the assistant server performing the converting the voiced instructions to the control commands and returning to the server a second message corresponding to the control commands.

19. The server of claim 18 wherein the controller further selects the assistant server from a plurality of assistant servers prior to the forwarding the first message, the assistant server selected based on availability of the assistant server and a ranking of the assistant server among the plurality of assistant servers.

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20. The server of claim 19 wherein the availability of the assistant server is determined by the controller based on a log on record stored in the memory and wherein the controller determines the ranking of the assistant server based on data maintained in the memory corresponding to one of an extent of availability of, a
10 timeliness of services provided by, an accuracy of the services provided by, and economic considerations related to the assistant server.

21. The server of claim 18 wherein the controller selects more than one assistant server from a plurality of assistant servers and controls the transmitter to forward the
15 first message to the more than one assistant server, each of the more than one assistant servers performing the converting the voiced instructions and the returning the respective second message to provide more than one respective second messages, the controller further comparing the more than one respective second messages to detect an error in the more than one respective second messages.

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22. The server of claim 21 wherein the selecting more than one assistant server further comprises selecting a trusted assistant server and an unknown assistant server and comparing the respective second messages to evaluate the unknown assistant server.

23. A software program for assisting with control of a communications unit, the software program when loaded and executing on a processor of a server resulting in the server performing a method comprising:

5 receiving an instruction message that corresponds to voiced instructions;
converting the voiced instructions to control commands;
providing a control message corresponding to the control commands; and
sending the control message to the communications unit, thereby assisting
with the control of the communications unit.

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24. The software program of claim 23:

wherein the receiving the instruction message further includes receiving
specific information sufficient to identify the communications unit; and

15 wherein the converting the voiced instructions includes converting the voiced
instructions to the control commands that correspond to a type of communications
unit.

25. The software program of claim 24, the method further comprising maintaining
a database associated with the communications unit, the database including one of a
20 parameter status and a mirrored database associated with the communications unit.

26. The software program of claim 23 wherein the receiving the instruction message occurs at a distribution server and the method further comprises forwarding a first message corresponding to the instruction message to an assistant agent, the
5 assistant agent performing the converting the voiced instructions to the control commands and returning to the distribution server a second message corresponding to the control commands.

27. The software program of claim 26, the method further comprising selecting
10 the assistant agent from a plurality of assistant agents prior to the forwarding the first message, the selecting based on availability of the assistant agent and a ranking of the assistant agent among the plurality of assistant agents.

28. The software program of claim 27 wherein the availability of the assistant
15 agent is determined by a log on procedure and the ranking of the assistant agent depends on one of an extent of availability of, a timeliness of services provided by, an accuracy of the services provided by, and economic considerations related to the assistant agent.

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30. The software program of claim 26, the method further comprising selecting more than one assistant agent from a plurality of assistant agents and forwarding the first message to the more than one assistant agent, each of the more than one assistant agent performing the converting the voiced instructions and the returning the
5 respective second message to provide more than one respective second messages, the method further comprising comparing the more than one respective second messages to detect an error in the more than one respective second messages.

31. The software program of claim 30 wherein the selecting more than one
10 assistant agent further comprises selecting a trusted assistant agent and an unknown assistant agent and comparing the respective second messages to evaluate the unknown assistant agent.